DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 029 624 JC 690 145

By-Howitt, Doyle; And Others
Perceptions of the Community Junior College as Held by Non-Education Professional People.
Pub Date [69]
Note-9p.
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.55
Descriptors-*Community Attitudes, *Junior Colleges, Surveys

This survey to determine perceptions of the community junior college as held by non-education professional people in two Nebraska communities found general agreement regarding the junior college's function and purposes, although the perceptions of the respondents tended to parallel the traditional liberal arts and pre-professional curricular programs of four-year colleges. It was agreed that (1) the programs of a junior college contributed to the total welfare of the community, (2) the junior college was a viable constituent of higher education, (3) there are weaknesses in areas of teaching, staff, curriculum, and selected aspects of student life, and (4) vocational-technical education was not accepted as part of the junior college instructional program. (JC)

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# PERCEPTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY JUNIOR COLLEGE AS HELD BY NON-EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE

CONSULTANT:

Dr. Udo H. Jansen, Associate Professor, University of Nebraska

INVESTIGATORS:

Doyle Howitt, Harold Peebles, Larry Smith

PROBLEM:

To determine, in selected aspects of concern to the junior college, the perceptions of the junior college held by professional persons in two divergent Nebraska communities. One community with a junior college the other community without a junior college.

PROCEDURE:

To survey the opinions of persons considered engaged in professional occupations and determine their perceptions in selected aspects of the junior college through the employment of a twenty-five item questionnaire. The survey instrument included structured responses and free response items designed to provide a matrix from which conclusions could be formulated. An aggregate of 135 questionnaires were circulated in two Nebraska communities. The survey instrument was developed specifically for purposes of the study.

THESIS STATEMENT:

The junior college represents a substantial and important segment of the diversified educational structure in the United States. Recent proliferation of new institutions and expanding enrollments

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gives evidence of its becoming the largest and in some respects the most important component of the educational hierarchy. The increasing importance of junior and community colleges emphasizes the need for comprehensive information about theses institutions. The report of this study hopefully contributes data for appraising and comprehending the two-year college; and provides new clues and insights for persons alert to the community college movement.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY:

This study grew out of an interest to determine the general image which the junior college or community college projects in the State of Nebraska. The dearth of information available in this aspect of the junior college further promoted and prompted the implementation of the study. The scope of the inquiry was limited to selected aspects of the junior college which generally conform to the basic aims and objectives outlined by advocates of the junior college movement. A search of the literature failed to reveal an adequate model which suggested a paradigm for the design and conduct of the study. As a result a special instrument was constructed. A prototype of the questionnaire included herein became the experimental data gathering instrument. For corrective purposes preliminary samples were administered. From these samples the instrument design was refined. The amended instrument was finalized and distributed to selected respondents.

The survey sampled the opinion of persons engaged in professional occupations. From their responses perceptions of the

junior college were analyzed. The sample was made on a selective basis inasmuch as, it was confined to the professional groups that could provide the greatest number of possible responses and were available in the selected communities.

This factor was considered a limitation of the study although it was not judged debilitative for purposes of analyzing the data. The designation of "professional" as employed in this study conforms to the .00 - .19 classification as prescribed in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles published by the United States Department of Labor. Utilization of the Dictionary of Occupational Titles minimizes possible misinterpretations.

An aggregate of 135 questionnaires were mailed to physicians, lawyers, dentists, accountants, bank presidents and bank vice-presidents. Professional educators were not included in the study. Responses from each community have been tabulated separately and percentages of responses in each of the several categories have been compiled and recorded on the following pages of this report. For the most part attention was focused on those aspects that tended to reveal consonant expressions and those that appeared to be at variance.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. There was general agreement of professional persons within each community concerning the junior college's functions and purposes. Their perceptions tend to parallel the traditional liberal arts and pre-professional curricular programs of four-year colleges.

2. No significant difference was found in perceptions of the junior college program between those residing in a community with an existing two-year institution and those where no junior college existed.
3. There was general agreement that the program of a junior college is a contributing factor to the total welfare of the community.
4. The professional persons in each community generally accepted the junior college concept as a viable constituent in the sector of higher education. They tended to credit certain functions as being more beneficial at the junior college as compared to those same functions at a four-year college.
5. In the total program of the junior college the respondents perceived weaknesses in the areas of teaching, staff, curriculum, and selected aspects of student life.
6. The acceptance of vocational-technical education as a sector of the junior college instructional program was not evidenced by the respondents.

# TABULATION OF OPINIONNAIRE TO DETERMINE PERCEPTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY JUNIOR COLLEGE AS HELD BY NON-EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE

## SAMPLE DATA

| | Number Circulated | Number* Useable Responses | % of Return |
|---|---|---|---|
| Community A (Without Junior College) | 115 | 84 | 73.04% |
| Community B (With Junior College | 20 | 12 | 60.00% |
| Total | 135 | 96 | |

*Three questionnaires returned incomplete or with qualifications which necessitated voiding the responses.

## TABULATION OF RESPONSES

| | | Community A Responses | % | Community B Responses | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Item 1 | YES | 53 | 63.09% | 6 | 50.00% |
| | NO | 30 | 35.71% | 5 | 41.66% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 1 | 1.20% | 1 | 8.34% |
| Total | | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 2 | YES | 78 | 92.85% | 12 | 100.00% |
| | NO | 4 | 4.75% | 0 | ---- |
| | NO RESPONSE | 2 | 2.40% | 0 | ---- |
| Total | | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 3 | YES | 55 | 65.47% | 8 | 66.66% |
| | NO | 28 | 33.33% | 4 | 33.34% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 1 | 1.20% | 0 | ---- |
| Total | | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 4 | MORE | 58 | 69.04% | 8 | 66.66% |
| | LESS | 1 | 1.20% | 0 | ---- |
| | SAME | 25 | 29.76% | 1 | 8.34% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 0 | ---- | 3 | 25.00% |
| Total | | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 5 | YES | 59 | 70.23% | 8 | 66.66% |
| | NO | 24 | 28.57% | 3 | 25.00% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 1 | 1.20% | 1 | 8.34% |
| Total | | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 6 | YES | 49 | 58.32% | 7 | 58.33% |
| | NO | 33 | 39.28% | 5 | 41.67% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 2 | 2.40% | 0 | ---- |
| Total | | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |

*Consult attached questionnaire for full text of the item.

| | | Community A | | Community B | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Responses | % | Responses | % |
| Item 7 | PRIVATE | 14 | 16.66% | 2 | 16.66% |
| | TAX | 69 | 82.14% | 9 | 75.00% |
| | EITHER | 1 | 1.20% | 0 | ---- |
| | NO RESPONSE | 0 | ---- | 1 | 8.34% |
| | Total | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 8 | PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD | 16 | 19.05% | 4 | 33.33% |
| | SEPARATE INDEPENDENT BOARD | 64 | 76.19% | 7 | 58.33% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 4 | 4.76% | 1 | 8.34% |
| | Total | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 9 | YES | 62 | 73.80% | 9 | 75.00% |
| | NO | 19 | 22.62% | 2 | 16.66% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 3 | 3.58% | 1 | 8.34% |
| | Total | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 10 | YES | 77 | 91.65% | 12 | 100.00% |
| | NO | 5 | 5.95% | 0 | ---- |
| | NO RESPONSE | 2 | 2.40% | 0 | ---- |
| | Total | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 11 | YES | 69 | 82.14% | 10 | 83.33% |
| | NO | 10 | 11.91% | 2 | 16.67% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 5 | 5.95% | 0 | ---- |
| | Total | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 12 | YES | 69 | 82.14% | 12 | 100.00% |
| | NO | 13 | 15.46% | 0 | ---- |
| | NO RESPONSE | 2 | 2.40% | 0 | ---- |
| | Total | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 13 | YES | 27 | 32.15% | 6 | 50.00% |
| | NO | 53 | 63.09% | 6 | 50.00% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 4 | 4.76% | 0 | ---- |
| | Total | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 14 | YES | 12 | 14.28% | 3 | 25.00% |
| | NO | 70 | 83.32% | 8 | 66.66% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 2 | 2.40% | 1 | 8.34% |
| | Total | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 15 | YES | 75 | 89.28% | 10 | 83.33% |
| | NO | 7 | 8.32% | 2 | 16.67% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 2 | 2.40% | 0 | ---- |
| | Total | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 16 | TUITION FREE | 7 | 8.32% | 2 | 16.67% |
| | CHARGES TUITION | 76 | 90.48% | 10 | 83.33% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 1 | 1.20% | 0 | ---- |
| | Total | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |

| | | | Community A | | Community B | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Responses | % | Responses | % |
| Item 17 | | ACADEMICALLY | 52 | 34.43% | 9 | 37.50% |
| | | SOCIALLY | 24 | 15.89% | 4 | 16.66% |
| | | FINANCIALLY | 72 | 47.68% | 11 | 45.84% |
| | | NONE OF THESE | 2 | 13.24% | 0 | ---- |
| | | NO RESPONSE | 1 | 6.62% | 0 | ---- |
| | Total | | 151 | ---- | 24 | ---- |
| Item 18 | ADVISORY & COORDINATING | | 72 | 79.12% | 8 | 66.66% |
| | DIRECT LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY | | 10 | 10.98% | 2 | 16.67% |
| | NO RESPONSIBILITY | | 7 | 7.69% | 2 | 16.67% |
| | NO RESPONSE | | 2 | 2.19% | 0 | ---- |
| | Total | | 91 | ---- | 12 | ---- |
| Item 19 | | BETTER THAN | 11 | 13.09% | 2 | 16.66% |
| | | EQUAL TO | 50 | 59.53% | 7 | 58.34% |
| | | NOT AS WELL | 23 | 27.38% | 3 | 25.00% |
| | Total | | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 20 | | LOCAL COMMUNITY | 14 | 16.66% | 2 | 16.66% |
| | | COUNTY WIDE | 17 | 20.23% | 3 | 25.00% |
| | | MULTIPLE COUNTY | 55 | 65.47% | 5 | 41.66% |
| | | ENTIRE STATE | 9 | 10.71% | 5 | 41.66% |
| | | NO RESPONSE | 4 | 4.76% | 0 | ---- |
| | Total | | 99 | ---- | 15 | ---- |
| Item 21 | | ALL | 26 | 30.93% | 6 | 50.00% |
| | | TOP 75% | 23 | 27.38% | 1 | 8.33% |
| | | TOP 50% | 23 | 27.38% | 4 | 33.33% |
| | | TOP 25% | 1 | 1.20% | 0 | ---- |
| | | NONE | 4 | 4.75% | 0 | ---- |
| | | NO RESPONSE | 3 | 3.56% | 0 | ---- |
| | Total | | 80 | 95.20% | 11 | 91.66% |
| | Respondent Added: | LOWER 75% | 2 | 2.40% | 0 | ---- |
| | | LOWER 25% | 2 | 2.40% | 1 | 8.34% |
| | Total | | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| Item 22 | | YES | 49 | 58.32% | 8 | 66.66% |
| 1) Housing | | NO | 29 | 34.53% | 4 | 33.34% |
| | | NO RESPONSE | 6 | 7.15% | 0 | ---- |
| | Total | | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| 2) Recreational Activities | | YES | 73 | 86.92% | 10 | 83.33% |
| | | NO | 7 | 8.32% | 0 | ---- |
| | | NO RESPONSE | 4 | 4.76% | 2 | 16.67% |
| | Total | | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |
| 3) Athletics | | YES | 66 | 78.57% | 8 | 66.66% |
| | | NO | 15 | 17.85% | 2 | 16.67% |
| | | NO RESPONSE | 3 | 3.58% | 2 | 16.67% |
| | Total | | 84 | 100.00% | 12 | 100.00% |

| | | Responses | % | Responses | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Item 23 | NO FEDERAL SUPPORT | 30 | 33.70% | 3 | 23.07% |
| | LIMITED FINANCIAL SUPPORT | 16 | 17.97% | 2 | 15.38% |
| | MATCHED WITH STATE FUNDS | 28 | 31.46% | 6 | 46.15% |
| | FOR BUILDING & EQUIPMENT | 15 | 16.85% | 2 | 15.38% |
| | OTHER | 0 | ---- | 0 | ---- |
| | Total | 89 | ---- | 13 | ---- |
| Item 24 | EQUAL TO 4-YEAR COLLEGE | 23 | 15.86% | 6 | 28.57% |
| | EQUAL TO STATE UNIVERSITY | 19 | 13.10% | 4 | 19.04% |
| | LESS THAN 4-YEAR COLLEGE | 31 | 21.37% | 2 | 9.54% |
| | LESS THAN STATE UNIVERSITY | 32 | 22.06% | 2 | 9.54% |
| | EQUAL TO CHURCH RELATED | 21 | 14.48% | 4 | 19.04% |
| | LESS THAN CHURCH RELATED | 17 | 11.72% | 2 | 9.54% |
| | NO RESPONSE | 2 | 1.37% | 1 | 4.76% |
| | Total | 145 | ---- | 21 | ---- |

Item 25 Tabulation not included in this report. Free response item.

# AN OPINIONNAIRE TO DETERMINE THE COMMUNITY PROFESSIONAL PERCEPTIONS OF THE JUNIOR COLLEGE

FOR ITEMS ONE TO SIXTEEN PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE RESPONSE:

1. Should a Junior College be considered as being a part of the secondary education program? YES_____ NO_____
2. In your opinion, should the Junior College consider the needs of the community? YES_____ NO_____
3. Would you recommend your son or daughter attend a Junior College? YES_____ NO_____
4. To what extent would a student attending a Junior College get personal attention if compared to the personal attention he might receive at a four-year institution.
   MORE THAN_____ LESS TH AN_____ ABOUT THE SAME_____
5. Should the adult education program be a part of the Junior College program rather than a part of the high school evening program? YES_____ NO_____
6. Do you feel that it is the community's responsibility to provide post-high school education for its youth? YES_____ NO_____
7. Do you favor a private or tax supported institution?
   PRIVATE_____ TAX SUPPORTED_____
8. Should the board of control be the: public school board of education_____, OR a separate independent board_____.
9. Do you feel that a Junior College does/should attract commercial enterprise to the community? YES_____ NO_____
10. Does/should a Junior College encourage community citizens to continue their education? YES_____ NO_____
11. Does/should the contribution of a Junior College improve the standard of living in the community? YES_____ NO_____
12. In your opinion, is the existence of a Junior College in your community justifiable? YES_____ NO_____
13. Should the Junior College take over the role of education for all freshmen and sophomore years and leave the junior and senior years for the four-year institutions? YES_____ NO_____
14. Should the Junior College assume the responsibility for vocational-technical training instead of through area vocational-technical schools? YES_____ NO_____
15. Would a Junior College contribute to the cultural activities of your community? YES_____ NO_____
16. Do you favor a Junior College which is:
    TUITION FREE_____ CHARGES TUITION_____

FOR ITEMS SEVENTEEN ON PLEASE CHECK AS MANY RESPONSES AS YOUR OPINION MAY REQUIRE OR MAY BE APPROPRIATE.

17. Would a student planning to continue his education for a college degree benefit from attending a Junior College:
    _____ ACADEMICALLY
    _____ SOCIALLY
    _____ FINANCIALLY
    _____ NONE
18. What relationship should exist between the State Department of Education and the Junior College?
    _____ ADVISORY AND COORDINATING ONLY
    _____ DIRECT LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY ONLY
    _____ NO RESPONSIBILITY
19. How do you think that an entering Junior College student would compare academically to a student entering a four-year institution?
    _____ BETTER THAN
    _____ EQUAL TO
    _____ NOT AS WELL
20. Should the Junior College be organized to serve:
    _____ LOCAL COMMUNITY
    _____ COUNTY WIDE
    _____ MULTI-COUNTY (Regional)
    _____ ENTIRE STATE
21. Which of the following high school graduates would profit most by attending a Junior College?
    _____ ALL
    _____ TOP 75 %
    _____ TOP 50%
    _____ TOP 25%
    _____ NONE
22. Is it advisable for a Junior College to provide:
    HOUSING FOR STUDENTS YES_____ NO_____
    RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES YES_____ NO_____
    ATHLETICS YES_____ NO_____
23. In your opinion, how much financial support for the Junior College should the federal government assume:
    _____ NONE
    _____ LIMITED FINANCIAL SUPPORT
    _____ MATCHED WITH STATE FUNDS
    _____ FOR BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT
    _____ OTHER (Specify)_____
24. Academically how do you compare a Junior College with other institutions of higher education:
    _____ EQUAL TO FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION
    _____ EQUAL TO A STATE UNIVERSITY
    _____ LESS THAN A FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION
    _____ LESS THAN A STATE UNIVERSITY
    _____ EQUAL TO CHURCH RELATED INSTITUTION
    _____ LESS THAN A CHURCH RELATED INSTITUTION
25. Please make any additional comments or indicate opinions you may have which were not included in the previous questions. If additional space is needed please use reverse side .